

METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR ADVERTISING ADJACENT TO A BEVERAGE
DISPENSER TO FACILITATE ADVERTISING INCOME DEVICE PLACEMENT IN HIGH
TRAFFIC VENUES

Field of the Invention

The present invention relates to beverage dispensers, and more particularly to methods and apparatuses for advertising adjacent to the beverage dispenser to facilitate advertising revenue from placement of the devices at high visibility, high traffic venues or retail establishments.

Background of the Invention

The beverage industry spends billions of dollars each year marketing a large assortment of products, including beer, wine, liquor, soft-drinks, water, sports drinks, juices, etc. For beer and soft-drink producers, television advertisements are the cornerstone of the advertising campaigns. Large amounts of time and money are spent creating advertisements that appeal to consumers. These advertisements are often humorous, glamorous, or otherwise appealing and are enjoyed and talked about by viewers worldwide. Producers of such advertisements also spend enormous amounts of money to purchase television air time needed to show the advertisements during key time slots. Beer and soft-drink advertisements are prevalent during televised sporting events and concerts, and target viewers who are likely to attend such events. Beer and soft-drink advertisers also often advertise products in other public venues such as restaurants, bars, festivals, parties, and the like.

Competition for these public venues is fierce among beverage producers, each wanting their product to be the only product available to the public in a given venue. In addition to simply selling their beverage product to the consumers at these venues, producers also recognize that the venues provide a good atmosphere for marketing their product. Based on the type of event being held at the venue, the producers know which demographic groups of consumers will

be in attendance. These groups can then be targeted with appropriately tailored marketing campaigns.

As a condition of selling their products, producers often require or strongly recommend that venues use specific dispensing equipment. The equipment is often specially designed to dispense the beverage in the manner preferred by the producer to ensure that a quality beverage is served to the customer every time. In addition, the equipment is usually outfitted with signs, decals, and logos that advertise the producer's product and build name and brand recognition.

Venues usually buy or lease beverage dispensing equipment from a preferred provider. The cost of the equipment is often a major issue when retailers consider the lease or purchase of such dispensing equipment. Commonly, the high quality dispensing equipment recommended by the beverage producer is foregone due to the relatively high cost of the equipment. To the detriment of the producers, the retailers will often purchase less expensive equipment that may not dispense the beverage in the manner preferred by the producer to produce the highest quality serving.

In light of the problems and limitations of the prior art described above, a need exists for a new beverage dispenser and a method of supplying this new beverage dispenser to retailers that lowers the cost of the dispenser to the retailer; makes the producer's brand of beverage more attractive to the retailer; makes the producer's brand of beverage more attractive to the consumer; and offers additional advertising opportunities that will ultimately benefit producers, retailers and consumers. Each preferred embodiment of the present invention achieves one or more of these results.

Summary of the Invention

The present invention is a method and apparatus for showing an advertiser's video advertisement and/or for playing an advertiser's audio advertisement adjacent to a beverage dispenser used in a public venue. In exchange for the right to advertise in the retailer's venue using the retailer's equipment, the producer pays a fee which helps offset the retailer's cost of

buying or leasing the beverage dispenser. The fee is paid directly to the preferred provider of the beverage dispenser, or alternatively, can be paid directly to the retailer if the applicable local laws, rules, and regulations permit such payment. When negotiating with a retailer for obtaining an account therewith, the producer can describe the dispenser recommended for use with the product and can discuss the options the retailer has for obtaining the dispenser. One of the options is the prior art method of having the retailer buy or lease a standard dispenser directly from a preferred provider at the normal price. The option of one preferred embodiment of the present invention is to have the retailer buy or lease a dispenser that is specially equipped to play television-type and/or radio-type advertisements and preferably record data relating to the amount of beverage dispensed while the advertisements are playing, and optionally to record data relating to the number of times and time of day the advertisements are played. This specially equipped dispenser is also preferably purchased directly from the preferred provider. While this specially equipped dispenser can be more expensive than some dispensers due to the added advertising equipment, the cost to the retailer will be offset by the advertising fees paid by the producer. Producers can buy advertising time from retailers for a negotiated fee.

In addition to offsetting the cost of the dispenser, the advertisements are also popular with consumers, which ultimately benefits the retailer. Most preferably, consumers are able to select their favorite television or radio advertisements and see or hear them on demand while waiting to purchase a beverage. The present invention can also be used to broadcast live events, television, sporting events, concerts, scores, news, contests, or other forms of information or entertainment. Advertisements, prices, drink specials, and the like can be incorporated into these displays in the form of subtitles, commercial interruptions, scrolling text or the like, thereby enticing consumers to view the advertisements and to approach the retailers. In public venues where long lines are prevalent, this entertainment will provide customers an enjoyable distraction while waiting in line.

Producers are also benefited by the apparatus and method of the present invention. Public venues provide a target-rich environment for playing new or preexisting television or radio advertisements that are otherwise seen or heard only during network broadcasting. Ideally, the advertisements will influence consumers who are waiting in line to purchase the